



Grade Four and Seven California Writing Standards Tests

Questions and Answers

Who is required to take the writing test?

- All students who are enrolled in grade four.
- All students in grades five and six being tested out of level with the grade four multiple-choice tests.
- All students in grade seven who are taking the grade seven multiple-choice tests.
- All students in grades eight and nine being tested out of level with the grade seven multiple-choice tests.

For which students are schools required to submit a Writing Prompt and Response Booklet for scoring?

Test booklets must be submitted with scorable materials for:

- All students given the test including students who write no response for the prompt—student was given the test, but the student's test booklet is blank.
- Students whose parents/guardians requested that the student not be tested with the writing test.

Why is there no place on the demographic page to indicate that a student will be taking the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA)?

All information for students taking the CAPA will be taken from the student's multiple-choice test booklet (Book 1 for grades two and three) or the answer document (grades four through eleven). Students are given the CAPA because they are unable to take the tests in the Standardized Testing and Report (STAR) Program even with accommodations or modifications. Therefore, students taking the CAPA will be unable to access the writing test component.

What should schools do with Writing Prompt and Response Booklets for students who were absent or whose booklets were pre-coded for taking the CAPA?

Mark the booklets "Void-CAPA" or "Void-Absent" and return them to the STAR Processing Center with the school's non-scorable materials.

When should the test sites return the scorable and non-scorable writing test materials to district STAR coordinators?

The March materials are to be returned by March 18 and the May materials by May 13.

What does "untimed" mean for the writing test?

"Untimed" means that the students are to have as much time as they need to complete a first draft story or essay in a single sitting. Most students will complete the task within the estimated time provided in the Item and Time Chart.

What types of materials must be covered or removed from rooms where the writing tests are administered?

Any charts or other materials that would help students write their responses are to be covered or removed, including materials that may be on student desks. These materials include, but are not limited to, scoring guides; grammar, punctuation, and capitalization rules; writing process guides; and hints for organizing writing.

What may teachers read to students?

Teachers are to read aloud:

- All information in "SAY" boxes in the "Directions for Administration."
- The directions on the front cover of the Writing Prompt and Response Booklet.

Students are required to read all other information in the test booklet, including the writing prompt/task, independently.

May students write rough drafts, revise them, and then write final stories or essays in the test booklets?

No, as in previous years, students are to write their first drafts on the lined pages of the test booklets. They are to use the unlined scratch paper only for planning their responses.



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May students use additional paper to complete their stories or essays if they do not have enough space in the booklet?

No, only what is written on the lined pages in the test booklet will be scored. Any additional paper will be removed and discarded before the tests are scored.

If students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 Plans type their responses, are these to be transcribed into the test booklet?

No, if the accommodations or modifications for a computer-generated response are correctly gridded, the typed response will be scored. Insert the typed response into the student's test booklet and submit for scoring.

If students write their responses in a language other than English, may teachers translate the responses and write them in the test booklets for the students?

No, each student must write his or her response in the test booklet. If the student uses enough English for the reader to score the paper, the paper will be scored. If there is an insufficient amount of English to be scored, the student's work will be coded as an "L"—student wrote in a language other than English.

Is used scratch paper to be returned with the non-scorable materials?

No, STAR test site coordinators are to collect and destroy the scratch paper.

What score will students receive on the California English-Language Arts Standards Test, if they do not receive a writing test score?

Students with no writing test scores will receive an overall ELA CST scaled score and performance level based on their responses to the multiple-choice components of the test. Two separate scales will be used to determine the students' scaled scores and performance levels: one for the multiple-choice test only and one for the combined multiple-choice/writing test.